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The scenery is wild, but it seems obstinately wanting in the beautiful. Everything is subservient to coal—men, trees, and mountains—the last holding in their close embrace the great wealth of the State, which the first are content to bring forth with the energy of men working for nothing more than mere existence.

The usual stories about trout are told, and of course the usual distance of six miles affords one of the best places in the State for fishing. We listened to our host, as he recounted how the Postmaster and the Squire went to the angler's El Dorado of this region a week ago last Sunday, and how they returned with baskets' full of these speckled treasures; but the talk about trout soon turned to talk about coal again, such being the inevitable termination to every subject in "these parts."

The second day we left this town for Catawissa, the terminus of our present trip. The ride is a fearful one for any but the bold and the adventurous, and the risk of accident seems continually present. You turn sharp curves, and hide behind corners, as you dash away up grades of ascent to summits which seem to be inaccessible; now a slower motion of the train indicates the vicinity of a bridge, and you roll on and pass over a chasm two hundred feet deep, on an arrangement of pine logs, by courtesy called a bridge; feeling thankful that one danger at any rate is over. There is an excitement, it is true, in such scenes and places; but the feeling is one of bravado, and pleasant to speak about when quietly seated at home in your own library.

The scenery is extremely wild, and as you wind spirally up the mountains, for so this road leads, you see abundance of material for interesting study. The oak is abundant here, and the gnarled and twisted branches, thrown out in fantastic form, contrast well with the lofty pines which stand like bristling spears, ready to impale some luckless train of cars, which it seems inevitable must be thrown from the track. The trip, however, is one which, although highly interesting to anybody, would warm the heart of an engineer more than the student of Art.

Arriving at Catawissa, a relief is afforded by the quiet sweep of the north branch of the broad Susquehanna, reflecting its well-wooded bank, lined with trees of great beauty and variety, and affording hints for many a fine landscape. High bluffs, covered with velvet foliage, with occasional glimpses of rock of the red sandstone variety, flank each side of the river, diminishing towards the distance by a gradual inclination, into a more than usual breadth of water in such places, while in the foreground are sweeping elms, and stately maples ever varied with the button-wood, whose white and mottled branches present a scene well worth a careful study. A summer might be profitably passed here by the artist, and a fair hotel and a good-natured landlord, might make this little old-fashioned town a desirable place for the season. Salmon are caught here occasionally, and the skilled fly-fisher might find a day's spot.

Returning by the way of Tamaqua, we crawled slowly up Summit Hill, another great coal locality, where you take a small passenger car, and dash ten miles down the inclined plane to the village of Mauch Chunk, nestled in the quiet valley of the Lehigh, in the midst of an amphitheatre of mountains. This little nook has grown into an important place, being the great receiving dépôt for the Lehigh coal, which from this place finds its way by canal and railroad to the seaboard.

The line of the Central Rail Road of New Jersey is highly interesting in the way of rural beauty: fine distances spread away in every direction, with the Raritan river threading the valley, dotted with picturesque cottages, and altogether affording the most attractive scenes we had looked upon since leaving home.

In a hasty excursion like this, it would be difficult to point to any precise locality where a season could be profitably spent in the study of Nature; yet, as I before suggested, the north branch of the Susquehanna at Catawissa, for fine river scenery, and almost anywhere on the line of the Central Road, between Bethlehem and Elizabeth, abundance of available material could be obtained, and excellent abiding places secured.

Yours, truly

N.

Studies among the Leaves.

KINGSLEY'S "TWO YEARS AGO."

SOMETHING like a year ago we quoted from the same author's *Glaucon* (CRAYON, iii. p. 138), his opinion that, to be a naturalist, one must be fond of adventure, and ready to meet any hazard or hardship. In Tom Thurnall (this book's hero) we have such an one; but, by no means, is Tom a *one-idea* individual, for large experiences with man and nature gave him a philosophy that dreamed of as many things in heaven and earth, as that of most men. In an American, Stangrave, we have the counter-hero, a sort of contrast to Tom, and Mr. Kingsley has delineated in him a class of our countrymen, that few foreigners have a notion of—men of high culture, who ignore politics with a cynicism (as the author says), that soon passes into epicureanism, when their wealth enables them to devote themselves solely to Art and luxurious wanderings over the world. Stangrave is an exception among our people, or rather represents an exceptional class. In all our own zeal for Arts and esthetical enjoyments, we trust our philosophy is not exclusive, for we know well enough that here, as in other things, an eye must be kept upon the outer world, if we would escape fanaticism. We should not be contending for Art, if we thought there was any danger of the *mind* of the community devoting itself solely to the cause of beauty, and leaving the rabble to rule us. Such is not the Utopia for us. We should then be found arguing for politics, as we are now for esthetics. Our endeavors may be feeble; but they should ever be devoted to preserve the balance of sanity. Upon this principle is the skeptic Tom Thurnall made to have faith—and not credulity, which is the so common notion of faith. Tom is a hero after our mind, and did good deeds when he believed no creed; and we doubt if, since Mr. Kingsley has left him, he has ever subscribed to articles, and none the less Christian may he be at the same time. He loved an angel, if ever earth had one, and married her, which was creed enough for him, no doubt.

Two Years Ago, as a title, signifies nothing more than that the novel expounds timely sentiments, and is attuned to current developments. The revolutions of late in Art are not forgotten among them, and Claude Mellot is the artist of the book. We must quote one conversation, represented as taking place in the Royal Academy Gallery:

"Stangrave found Claude before one of those Pre-Raphaelite pictures which Claude does not appreciate as he ought. '*Desinit in culticem mulier formosa superna*,' said Stangrave, as he looked over Claude's shoulder; 'but I suppose he followed nature, and copied his model.'

"'That he didn't,' said Claude, 'for I know who his model was; but if he did, he had no business to do so. I object on principle to these men's notions of what copying nature means. I don't deny him talent. I am ready to confess that there is more imagination, more honest work in that picture than in any other in the room. The hysterical, all but grinning joy upon the mother's face, is a miracle of truth. I have seen the expression more than once; doctors see it often in the sudden revulsion from terror and agony to certainty and peace; I only marvel where he ever met it. But the general effect is unpleasant, marred by patches of sheer ugliness, like that child's foot. There is the same mistake in all his pictures. Whatever they are, they are not beautiful, and no magnificence of surface-coloring will make up, in my eyes, for willful ugliness of form. I say that nature is beautiful; and there-

* Published by Ticknor & Fields. Boston. 1857.

fore nature cannot have been truly copied, or the general effect would have been beautiful also. I never found out the fallacy till the other day in looking at a portrait by one of them. The woman for whom it was meant was standing by my side, young and lovely; the portrait hung there, neither young nor lovely, but a wrinkled caricature, twenty years older than the model.'

"But did you ever see a modern portrait which more perfectly expressed character; which more completely fulfilled the requirements you laid down a few evenings since?"

"Never: and that makes me all the more cross with the willful mistake of it. He had painted every wrinkle. What right had he to cram into a face a twentieth of the size of life, all which nature had spread over a far larger one?"

"Why not, if he diminished the muscles in proportion?"

"Just what neither he nor any man could do, without making them so small, as to be invisible, save under a microscope; and the result was that he had caricatured every wrinkle, as his friend has in those horrible knuckles of Shem's wife. Besides, I deny utterly your assertion that one is bound to paint what is there. On that very fallacy they are all making shipwreck. You must paint what you see there. They forget that human beings are men with two eyes, and not daguerreotype lenses with one eye; and so are striving and contriving to introduce into their pictures the very defect of the daguerreotype, which the stereoscope is required to correct."

"I comprehend. They forget that the double vision of our two eyes gives a softness, and indistinctness, and roundness to every outline."

"Exactly so; and therefore, while for distant landscapes motionless, and already softened by atmosphere, the daguerreotype is invaluable; yet, for taking portraits, in any true sense, it will be always useless, not only for the reason I just gave, but for another one, which the Pre-Raphaelites have forgotten."

"Because all the features cannot be in focus at once?"

"Oh, no, I am not speaking of that. Art, for aught I know, may overcome that; for it is a mere defect in the instrument. What I mean is this: it tries to represent as still what never yet was still for the thousandth part of a second—that is, a human face; and as seen by a spectator, who is perfectly still, as no man ever yet was. My dear fellow, don't you see that what some painters call idealizing a portrait is, if it be wisely done, really painting for you the face which you see, and know, and love: her ever-shifting features, with expression varying more rapidly than the gleam of the diamond on her finger; features, which you in your turn are looking at with ever-shifting eyes; while a dozen other expressions, equally belonging to it, are hanging in your memory and blending themselves with the actual picture in your retina, till every little angle is somewhat rounded, every little wrinkle somewhat softened, every little shade somewhat blended with the surrounding lights, so that the sum total of what you see, and are intended by Heaven to see, is something far softer, lovelier—younger, perhaps, thank Heaven! than it would look if your head was screwed down in a vice, to look with one eye at her head screwed down in a vice also; though even that, thanks to the muscles of the eye, would not produce the required ugliness; and the only possible method of fulfilling the Pre-Raphaelite idea would be, to set a petrified Cyclops to paint his petrified brother." [Pp. 141-3]

Ruder natures, too, can arrive at such results, he imagines, when he makes an uncouth shoreman say—

"That's it, dra'd out all natral in paints, and her bonnet and her shawl, and all just like life; we were going to ax you to do one of they garritypes; but she would have'n noo price; besides 't an't cheerful looking they sort, with your leave; too much blackamoor wise, you see, and over thick about the nozzes, most times, to my liking." [Pp. 299.]

Claude, however, gets tired of painting nature clumsily, and turns photographer himself, in full confidence that before seven

years he can have an instrument that will enable him to add color to his light and shade pictures.

"No," says he "I yield to the new dynasty. The artist's occupation is gone henceforth, and the painter's studio, like all charms, must fly at the mere touch of cold philosophy."

At another time he says—

"Now, I am content to have done with symbolisms, and say, what you all mean I care not; all I know is that I can draw pleasure from the mere sight of you, as perhaps you do from the mere sight of me; so let us sit together, Nature and I, and stare into each other's eyes like two young lovers careless of each other's griefs. I will not even take the trouble to paint her. Why make ugly copies of perfect pictures? Let those who wish to see her, take railway tickets, and save us academicians colors and canons. *Quant à moi*, the public must go to the mountains, as Mahomet had to do, for the mountains shall not come to the public."

Indeed, Claude, we thought better of you once. Claude, after all, had not the earnest, self-reliant soul of a true artist, and from photographing butterflies, and coral-lines, and misty landscapes, and thus becoming acquainted with its facility, by this time, we fear he may have compounded with his honesty for more ambitious and less warrantable attempts.

GERALD MASSEY.—This beautiful issue* will do much to familiarize a poet, who deserves a wide acquaintanceship. His circumstances have been untoward; but he has surmounted them, and become a crowned poet. There is a luxuriance about his verse that it is difficult to reconcile with his life of struggles; and a freedom from the conventionalities of language that we had thought no one but an affluent scholar could have acquired in these days, such as the latent efficacy of alliterative sounds, and the way in which his metaphors are fused with the mould of his thoughts, instead of being collated with it. His utterance, however, is sometimes too richly sparkled over, like an eager streamlet whose glistering hides its channel bed; sometimes too profusely figured like an Orient song, so that the effect is rather languishing than inspiring. He is most poetical when he sings of that contentment that is so dear to a poor man, and which he finds in what he loves: when he becomes anxious for his class and country, and trumps the strains of politics and war, we see better his earnest nature, but he is less poetical. After perusing his songs of this description we are glad to find relief in those of the milder nature. In this nature of contrast he is somewhat akin to Freiligrath, whose champion-songs, that so stirred the Rhine land in 1848, breathe very much the sentiment of Massey's, and some of the German later poetry is quite of the endearing character of the Englishman's.

That Massey will be an universal favorite is not to be expected. He never litches in a tuneless sense, but there are times when his flavor is too stringent for sensitive faculties. It must be remembered, however, that poetry is a kind of telescopic medium to look at the horizonized nature, which will not suit all eyes at the same gauge. A trifling movement, out or in, from an accustomed focus, is likely to blur the scene, and because we can no longer see distinctly, we must not forget that the new gauge better than our own may fit our neighbor. Gerald Massey is one who takes many licenses in his poetry, and to enjoy him we must feel disposed to allow them. The lamp of knowledge cannot safely enter the mine of poetry, unless we have a Davy-spirit to give it a wire-netting of poetical faith.

* The Poetical Works of Gerald Massey. Complete in one volume Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1857. Pocket edition in blue and gold.

*The Illustrated Hand-Book of American Travel** is, we believe, the first work of its class yet published in this country on a scale large enough to answer as a traveller's guide to the entire Union. The editorship of the book has been intrusted to Mr. T. Addison Richards. Mr. Richards' acquaintance with scenery, north and south, renders him peculiarly fitted to fulfill the duty assigned him, while his profession as an artist is a guarantee of taste and discrimination in the selection of such localities as it may be desirable for travellers to visit. In turning over this hand-book we read of the scenery of Georgia, Western Virginia, and Tennessee with great interest: we are inclined to regard this section as a landscape painter's *El Dorado*, and one which will yet be a treasure to any artist-pioneer who may be disposed to study and portray its characteristics.

One of the most interesting passages in the book is that descriptive of the home of W. Gilmore Simms. Mr. Simms is himself a true artist (in a literary sense), and a true friend to the cause of Art. For graphic power in describing scenery, and great dramatic skill in the representation of character and incident, he is not rivalled by any of his contemporaries: his novels and tales will last as long as the country and scenes that inspired them, and be the more admired in proportion as the public become able to recognize and honor original genius. The spot on which he resides is one of the most interesting in the South, because associated with his name, and we accordingly quote Mr. Richards' description of it:

"At Woodlands, a mile only south of Midway, the centre of the road, lives the distinguished poet and novelist, Simms; and, as he is always upon hospitable thoughts intent, we will pay him a flying visit, not doubting of our welcome. Yonder, in that wide and spreading lawn, stands our author's mansion—an old-fashioned brick structure, with massive and strange portico. The ranks of orange trees and live oak which sentinel his castle, are the objects of his tenderest care—true and ardent lover of Nature as he is. Mr. Simms has a particular fondness for the especial grape-vine, depending in such fantastic and numberless festoons from the limbs of yon venerable tree. He has immortalized it in his song; and as it is a good specimen of its class—a class numerous in the South—we will pay it an humble tribute in our prose. It is strong-limbed as a giant—and, but for the grace with which it clings to the old forest-king, would seem to be rather struggling with him for his sceptre, than loyally and lovingly suing for his protection. The vine drops its festoons, one beneath the other, in such a manner that half a dozen persons may find a cozy seat, each over his fellow, for a merry swing. On a dreamy summer eve, you may oscillate, in these rustic couches, to your heart's content; one arm thrown round the vine will secure you in your seat, while the hand may hold the favorite book, and the other pluck the delicious clusters of grapes, which, as you swing, encircle your head like the wreath upon the brow of Bacchus. If the rays of the setting sun be hot, then the rich and impenetrable canopy of foliage above you will not prove ungrateful.

"A stroll over Mr. Simms' plantation will give you a pleasant inkling of almost every feature of the Southern lowlands, in natural scenery, social life, and the character and position of the slave population. You may sleep sweetly and soundly within his hospitable walls, secure of a happy day on the morrow, whether the rain holds you prisoner within doors, or the glad sunshine drags you abroad. He will give you a true Southern breakfast, at a very comfortable hour, and then furnish you abundant sources of amusement in his well-stocked library, or suffer you to seek it elsewhere, as your fancy listeth. At dinner, you shall not lack good cheer, for either the physical or the intellectual man, and then you may take a pleasant stroll to the quiet banks of the Edisto—watch the raft-men floating lazily down the stream, and interpret as you will the windings and echoes of their boat-horns—or you may muse in the shaded bowers of Turtle Cove, or either of the many other inlets and bays of the stream."

* *"The Illustrated Hand-Book of American Travel."* D. Appleton & Co: New York. Pp. 420.

The following extract from the *New York Herald* is a sound, sensible, judiciously-expressed article on Genius and the Greek Slave:

"We do not wish to be understood as subscribing unconditionally to the extravagant eulogiums which it is the habit to bestow upon American artists, simply because they are American. Whilst a generous patronage undoubtedly contributes to promote the interests and elevate the character of Art by stimulating competition, we are convinced that undiscriminating praise has a directly contrary tendency. The history of the different schools of painting and sculpture, ancient as well as modern, shows that genius is not an exotic, and cannot be forced into an artificial growth. Great sculptors, like great painters, must be 'to the manor born' and possess the organization necessary to the development of Art in its highest aspects. No study, however severe—no schooling, however classically correct, can make an artist of a man to whom Nature has denied those finer physical and intellectual gifts, which go to make up what is called genius. A great artist not only sees, but feels, in the full force of the term; and it is this intensity of feeling and vision which strike the spectator of his works with a sense of his superiority. These qualities may, it is true, be acquired in a degree by long schooling and a close observation of the works of others, but they are never to be found in their full force unless when they spring from an organization originally endowed with them. When, therefore, we behold the highest triumphs of Art we are forced to acknowledge that the inspiration comes from above, or, in other words, that Nature herself has guided the pencil of the artist.

"There is another distinctive characteristic of original genius which should not be forgotten in estimating the merits of modern works. No mind of large creative power likes to reproduce its own conceptions. For tempting-pecuniary inducements a great artist may be prevailed upon to repeat the same work, although it must always be a distasteful task; but if true to his genius he will not stoop to reproduce in other forms an idea once fully developed. When, therefore, we find a painter or a sculptor introducing into his subsequent productions the prevailing characteristics of a successful work, and living, as it were, upon the credit of a single happy effort, we may safely set him down as a man of but limited genius, if genius can at all be allied with poverty of conception.

"When Powers gave to the world his Greek Slave, it was acknowledged to be a remarkable effort. It was the first American work of the kind which had ever succeeded in eliciting any very large amount of foreign testimony to its merits. The pride with which we naturally regarded this success of our countryman, naturally led us into the mistake of overestimating those merits. The qualified character of the praise which the most reliable of the European critics awarded to it should have moderated our self-gratulations and led us to examine more narrowly into its claims as a first class work. In the excess of our patriotism, however, we set down their reserve to jealousy, and raised an altar to the Greek Slave.

"What, however, our own critical judgment failed to detect in this work—the absence of creative power—the artist has himself presented us with convincing evidence of in his subsequent productions. The softness of expression, the delicacy of manipulation, and we must say it, the general feebleness which constituted the prevailing features of the former, are to be found in all, whether the subject demanded more vigorous treatment in its mental characteristics or a freer chisel in its artistic treatment. Infant life and undeveloped womanhood, in which soft and effeminate lines are sufficient to embody the little character which these subjects possess, will always find a successful delineator in Powers. But when he has characteristics to deal with, such as the voluptuous grace of the Venus de Medici, the virile force and muscular development of the Farnese Hercules, or the classic beauty of the Apollo Belvidere, he utterly fails. Like the student of anatomy who has traced where the nerves and muscles of the human body take their ramifications, but who has not mastered the philosophy of their arrangement, Powers seems to have reached a point in Art beyond which his abilities cannot carry him. The consequence is that we have the immature proportions and characterless features of the Greek Slave reproduced in all his later works. It is not to be wondered at, under such circumstances, that his creations, instead of rising, should have fallen in value, and that they should not unfrequently make their appearance in the auction marts."